

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Thursday, August 12, 2004

## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES July 2004

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for July, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$336.5 billion, an increase of 0.7 percent ( $\pm 0.8\%$ ) from the previous month and up 6.5 percent ( $\pm 1.0\%$ ) from July 2003. Total sales for the May through July 2004 period were up 7.6 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The May to June 2004 percent change was revised from -1.1 percent ( $\pm 0.8\%$ ) to -0.5 percent ( $\pm 0.2\%$ ).

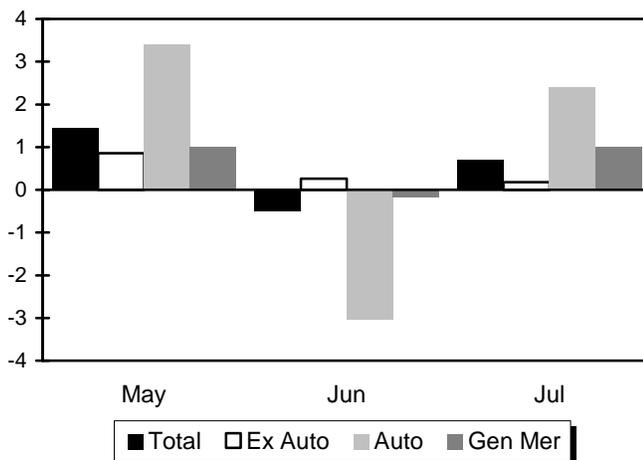
Retail trade sales were up 0.7 percent ( $\pm 0.8\%$ ) from June 2004 and were 6.3 percent ( $\pm 1.2\%$ ) above last year. Gasoline station sales were up 18.6 percent ( $\pm 2.1\%$ ) from July 2003 and sales of nonstore retailers were up 12.2 percent ( $\pm 4.0\%$ ) from last year.

*The advance estimates are based on a subsample of the Bureau's full retail and food services sample. A stratified random sampling method is used to select approximately 5,000 retail and food services firms whose sales are then weighted and benchmarked to represent the complete universe of over three million retail and food services firms. Responding firms account for approximately 65% of the MARTS dollar volume estimate. For an explanation of the measures of sampling variability included in this report, please see the Reliability of Estimates section on the last page of this publication.*

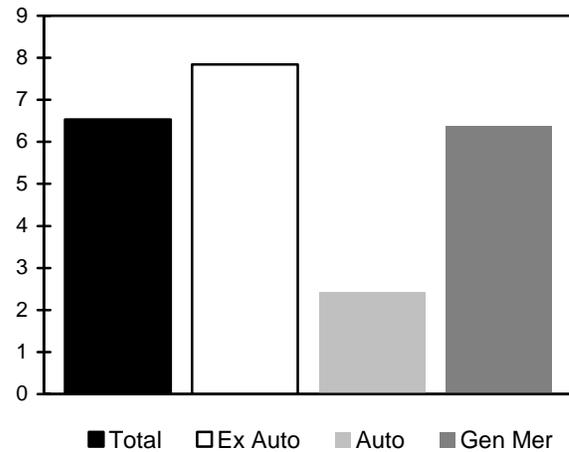
### Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

From Previous Month



From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for August is scheduled to be released September 14, 2004 at 8:30 a.m.

Address inquiries concerning this report to Scott Scheleur, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233. Telephone: 301-763-2713.

This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call 202-482-1986. The data are also available on the Internet - <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

**Table 1. Estimated Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business**

(In Millions of Dollars and Annual Percent Change)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted						Adjusted <sup>1</sup>					
		7 Month Total		2004			2003		2004			2003	
		2004	% Chg. 2003	July <sup>2</sup> (a)	June (p)	May (r)	July	June	July <sup>2</sup> (a)	June (p)	May (r)	July (r)	June (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	2,290,642	8.3	345,868	339,414	346,372	323,056	313,353	336,495	334,204	335,920	315,863	312,329
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,738,578	9.4	260,282	257,720	262,498	239,460	234,022	258,279	257,816	257,147	239,495	236,718
	Retail .....	2,064,963	8.0	311,206	306,465	312,620	291,792	283,014	304,010	301,901	303,683	285,888	282,585
	<b>GAFO<sup>3</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	79,341	81,951	75,707	74,884	(*)	84,567	84,417	80,755	80,010
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	552,064	4.9	85,586	81,694	83,874	83,596	79,331	78,216	76,388	78,773	76,368	75,611
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	502,874	4.9	78,152	74,238	76,800	76,199	72,310	71,242	69,446	71,776	69,588	68,867
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	61,111	63,200	63,916	60,317	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,456	7,074	7,397	7,021	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	57,914	8.4	8,830	8,523	8,210	8,225	7,879	8,777	8,679	8,455	8,225	8,224
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,648	4,543	4,319	4,166	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,875	3,667	3,906	3,713	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	54,172	10.7	7,978	7,964	7,650	7,437	7,249	8,510	8,491	8,435	7,965	7,819
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,705	5,554	5,290	5,087	(*)	6,128	6,077	5,676	5,541
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,259	2,096	2,147	2,162	(*)	2,363	2,358	2,289	2,278
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	213,421	15.6	32,351	35,603	35,032	29,820	30,313	30,351	30,680	30,514	27,369	26,655
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	31,010	29,355	26,346	25,544	(*)	27,589	27,332	24,082	23,456
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	303,802	4.8	46,283	43,933	45,216	43,847	41,561	43,956	43,914	43,863	42,317	42,089
4451	Grocery stores .....	273,597	4.2	41,397	39,388	40,567	39,523	37,462	39,351	39,349	39,309	38,113	37,955
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,762	2,809	2,758	2,570	(*)	2,807	2,812	2,678	2,628
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	116,972	7.2	16,659	16,743	16,846	15,955	15,446	16,930	16,981	16,846	16,182	15,907
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,221	14,351	13,484	13,077	(*)	14,511	14,380	13,717	13,565
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	176,972	14.1	28,069	27,304	27,602	23,408	22,245	25,966	26,103	26,064	21,897	21,410
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	99,035	8.3	14,537	14,222	15,365	13,766	13,448	15,670	15,684	15,766	15,084	14,863
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	889	907	762	829	(*)	946	939	864	878
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,873	3,106	2,539	2,632	(*)	3,027	3,016	2,853	2,773
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,956	5,284	5,097	4,787	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,795	1,978	1,859	1,756	(*)	1,901	1,930	1,909	1,854
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	42,052	3.8	6,213	6,155	5,815	5,897	5,966	6,835	6,749	6,715	6,581	6,673
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	271,073	8.2	40,350	39,536	41,921	37,350	37,437	42,076	41,656	41,728	39,555	39,071
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	112,000	0.3	16,367	16,187	17,376	16,344	16,616	17,695	17,655	17,779	18,000	17,864
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,389	17,600	16,544	16,829	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,349	24,545	21,006	20,821	(*)	24,001	23,949	21,555	21,207
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	20,027	21,043	17,820	17,668	(*)	20,541	20,450	18,240	17,919
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,322	3,502	3,186	3,153	(*)	3,460	3,499	3,315	3,288
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	61,969	6.2	9,002	9,071	9,674	8,540	8,462	9,200	9,109	9,416	8,724	8,742
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	115,517	11.1	15,348	15,717	15,415	13,951	13,677	17,523	17,467	17,108	15,621	15,521
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,450	10,327	9,446	9,147	(*)	11,188	11,213	10,135	10,041
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	225,679	10.9	34,662	32,949	33,752	31,264	30,339	32,485	32,303	32,237	29,975	29,744

(\*) Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these business classifications.

(NA) Not available. (a) Advance estimates. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

Note: Totals include data for business classifications not shown separately.

(1) Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-12-ARIMA program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are released on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

(2) Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

(3) GAFO represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise (furniture & home furnishings (442), electronics & appliances(443), clothing & accessories(448), sporting goods, hobby, book, music (451), general merchandise(452), office supplies, stationery, and gift stores(4532)).

(4) Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

**Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business**

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Percent Change <sup>1</sup>					
		July 2004 Advance from --		June 2004 Preliminary from --		May 2004 through July 2004 from --	
		June 2004 (p)	July 2003 (r)	May 2004 (r)	June 2003 (r)	Feb. 2004 through Apr. 2004	May 2003 through July 2003
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	0.7	6.5	-0.5	7.0	1.5	7.6
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.2	7.8	0.3	8.9	1.6	9.0
	Retail .....	0.7	6.3	-0.6	6.8	1.5	7.5
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	2.4	2.4	-3.0	1.0	1.1	3.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.6	2.4	-3.2	0.8	1.3	3.3
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	1.1	6.7	2.6	5.5	0.3	5.4
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	0.2	6.8	0.7	8.6	1.0	8.1
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	-1.1	10.9	0.5	15.1	1.5	14.4
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.1	3.9	0.1	4.3	1.3	4.6
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.0	3.2	0.1	3.7	1.2	4.0
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	-0.3	4.6	0.8	6.8	1.1	6.2
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	-0.5	18.6	0.1	21.9	5.8	21.3
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	-0.1	3.9	-0.5	5.5	-0.5	5.6
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	1.3	3.9	0.5	1.1	-0.1	2.7
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	1.0	6.4	-0.2	6.6	0.9	6.9
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.2	-1.7	-0.7	-1.2	-1.3	-1.0
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	1.0	5.5	-3.3	4.2	2.2	5.9
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	0.3	12.2	2.1	12.5	3.0	12.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ...</b>	0.6	8.4	0.2	8.6	1.1	8.8

(p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

### Source of Data and Reliability of Estimates

**Source of Data:** The Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey each month to provide an early indication of sales of retail and food service companies. The Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey is a voluntary survey of a sub-sample of about 5,000 firms selected from the Monthly Retail Trade Survey. Firms responding to this survey account for approximately 65% of the dollar volume estimate.

**Reliability of Estimates:** The reliability of the estimates is a function of sampling and nonsampling errors. The margin of sampling error, as included on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90% confidence

interval. If, for example, the trend estimate is +1.2% and the standard error is 0.9%, then the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9\%$  or  $\pm 1.5\%$ , and the 90% confidence interval is -0.3% to +2.7%. If the interval contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. For monthly levels, the coefficient of variation (CV) is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value  $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$  (the estimated value). Estimates of sampling variability are given in Table 3. Nonsampling error, on the other hand, can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, and response errors. Although not directly measured, precautionary steps are taken to minimize nonsampling error. Additional survey information is available at <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

**Table 3. Measures of Variability of and Revision to Advance Estimates for Level and Trend**

NAICS Code	Kind of Business	Level of sales: Median CV <sup>(2)</sup> for Current Mo. (%)	Trend (percent change): Median standard error <sup>(2)</sup> for			Revision for month- to-month change <sup>(1)</sup>	
			Current Mo. to Previous Mo.	Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr.	Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	total .....	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.2
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	1.9	1.4	0.7	1.7	0.1	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.0	1.6	0.7	1.8	0.1	0.5
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	3.7	1.3	1.1	1.9	0.2	0.7
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	1.8	0.6	0.5	1.8	0.2	0.2
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;....</b>						
	<b>supplies dealers.....</b>	1.9	1.0	0.7	1.4	0.3	0.4
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.3
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.1
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	3.1	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.1	0.2
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.7	0.7	0.5	1.3	0.6	0.6
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories</b>						
	<b>stores .....</b>	1.4	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.4
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp;</b>						
	<b>music stores.....</b>	2.7	1.7	1.2	2.0	0.3	0.6
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	4.0	3.4	2.0	3.9	0.4	0.7
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	3.8	1.8	1.0	2.4	0.5	0.7
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	2.3	0.7	0.7	1.4	0.3	0.3



(1) These columns measure the difference between the estimates of trend for the same pair of data months, i.e. the difference between the Advance/Preliminary ratio and the Preliminary/Final ratio estimates. Revisions are based on estimates from the 12 most recent months.  
 (2) Medians are based on estimates from the 12 most recent months.